

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 1709

Title: *An act relating to mandates on school districts.*

Brief Description: *Changing provisions relating to school mandates.*

Sponsors: *Representatives McMorris, Chandler, Mastin and Smith.*

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Meeting Date: *February 20, 1997 and February 24, 1997.*

Bill Analysis Prepared by: *Joe Hauth (786-7111).*

Background:

Basic education compliance: The Legislature must provide basic education for all kindergarten through twelfth grade students, and fund it through a stable revenue source. The Basic Education Act of 1977, as amended, includes the following requirements:

- Student learning goals;
- Program hours for basic courses of instruction;
- A minimum school year of 180 days;
- Staff/student ratios;
- Teacher/student contact hours; and
- An allocation formula for distributing state funds to school districts.

School districts must report basic education compliance to the State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, including reports needed for administering basic education programs, estimating general fund appropriation requests, providing local effort assistance, and supplemental activities.

Paperwork reduction: The Superintendent of Public Instruction must make every effort to reduce paperwork in administering basic education programs, and in providing local effort assistance.

Staff assistance from school districts: The State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction occasionally ask a school district employee to serve on a committee, or to assist in other activities. There are several administrative requirements associated with paying for the staff assistance, and in finding a substitute to cover the employee's absence.

School art: The Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education must allocate 0.5 percent of state school construction funds to the Washington State Arts Commission for acquiring works of art for placement on public lands, in consultation with school districts.

Medicaid reimbursement: Washington State receives federal Medicaid funds to reimburse school districts for costs incurred in providing medical services to special education students. School districts pay for medical services with state funds. Medicaid is then billed for covered services. After administrative and billing fees are paid, the Superintendent of Public Instruction pays 80 percent of the reimbursement to the state general fund. The Superintendent of Public Instruction pays the remaining 20 percent of the reimbursement to school districts, if school districts apply the money toward special education students. As of June 30, 1996, Medicaid had reimbursed the state \$18 million through billings submitted by 238 school districts.

School district audits: The state auditor must audit school districts periodically. The auditor reviews first class districts (districts with more than 2,000 students) annually, and second class districts (districts with less than 2,000 students) every two or three years. The school district pays for the audit.

AIDS training: School district employees must be trained in the prevention, transmission, and treatment of AIDS. The Superintendent of Public Instruction has developed AIDS training materials for use by school districts.

School Directors' Association: The Washington State School Directors' Association is a self-governed, self-funded school board association. The Legislature established the school directors' association in 1947. The association's purpose is to assist school directors in effectively governing their schools to improving student learning. School directors are automatically members of the association. The association provides information to members, has a governmental relations program to communicate school directors' views to state education policymakers, and convenes committee meetings and other meetings to address member needs (OSPI, 1996).

Summary of Bill:

Basic education compliance: Language regarding the State Board of Education's authority to ensure school district compliance with basic education program funding and allocation requirements and supplemental program approval requirements is deleted. Language regarding school board compliance reports to the Superintendent of Public Instruction regarding basic skills and work skills requirements is deleted. School districts must ensure compliance with basic education program requirements. The Superintendent of Public Instruction may not require school districts to annually report information on the sources of revenue for state categorical programs.

Paperwork reduction: If the Superintendent of Public Instruction requires the assistance of school district employees, then it must reduce the amount of paperwork

required in using the employee's services, and in finding a substitute employee. The Superintendent of Public Instruction must report to the Legislature by December 1, 1997, on specific actions that have been taken in 1997 to meet paperwork reduction requirements.

School art: Current law is repealed that requires 0.5 percent of state funds for new school construction to be used for art projects.

Medicaid reimbursement: Second class school districts (fewer than 2,000 students) are exempted from participating in the Medicaid reimbursement program.

School district audits: The state auditor must audit schools every three years, unless a more frequent audit is needed as a grant condition, or if the state auditor has evidence that more frequent auditing is needed.

AIDS training: The Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Department of Health may not require school employees to undertake AIDS training. The Superintendent of Public Instruction must make AIDS information and training materials available to school districts.

School Directors' Association: Membership in the Washington State School Directors' Association is no longer mandatory. The school directors' association must only provide liability insurance for member school districts. The school directors' association may only set policy for member school districts, and may only charge dues to participating school districts.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 12, 1997.

Effective Date: Sections 2 and 4 of this act take effect September 1, 2000. However, sections 2 and 4 of this act shall not take effect if, by September 1, 2000, a law is enacted stating that a school accountability and academic assessment system is not in place.